



Governor Brian Schweitzer

Montana

GOVERNOR'S STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

SWIB UPDATE

DECEMBER 29, 2011

Rebranding Summit a Success: Two-Year College Transformation Discussion

In mid December, more than 100 educators, professionals and stakeholders gathered in Bozeman to discuss strategies for the transformation of the state's two year college system. In what officials are calling the "Rebranding Summit", a significant milestone was reached in the process to reform the state's two year college system into a better, more comprehensive system of education and job training for Montanans, with a stronger identity and a more positive image. The new branding will include the name, location, mission and university affiliation of each school, to help communities better understand their local college's offerings.

In what State Deputy Commissioner John Cech called a "revolutionary" gathering, one the largest groups of people concerned with two-year colleges in Montana who had met in over 20 years discuss the system's College!Now initiative to make two-year colleges in the state more accessible and better coordinated, with the goal of increasing enrollment.

The College!Now initiative,

funded by a grant from the Indiana-based Lumina Foundation, is focused on implementing five main goals: expanding the transferability of credits from two-year colleges; providing more workplace development opportunities; expanding developmental education and making the systems more accessible to adults 25 and older and people with families; focusing on the needs of communities and creating lifelong learning opportunities. *To read more, visit the Helena IR at [Colleges Aim To Improve...](#)* by Sanjay Talwani

SWIB Partnership Procedure Updated

The State Workforce Investment Board has updated their procedure regarding partnerships and letters of support for grant applications. Please check out the [new procedure](#) on our website under Public Resources.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

HELENA, MT.:

- Life Long Learning, 1/11/12, 1 p.m., Capitol Building, Room # 137.
- Sector Strategies 1/11/12, 1 p.m., Capitol Building, Room # 405.
- SWIB, January 12, 2012. Capitol Building, 8 a.m. Room #317.

2011- 2013 STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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WORKFORCE NEWS

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

- UM-Helena considers doubling its air and power-train program next fall in response to the [increasing demand](#) for skilled workers at Boeing Helena.
- The [Bakken oil fields are creating jobs](#) and spreading the boom across the hi-line. Many businesses are planning expansions, but are worried about the growing needs of infrastructure.
- An increasing need for commercial driver's license certificates in the Williston Basin dramatically increases enrollment in [Miles Community College CDL courses](#).
- [Bozeman](#) featured as an ideal place for tech startup companies in Inc. magazine.

2012 Economic Forecast

Although Pat Barkley, Director of the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of Montana, predicts that meaningful economic recovery is likely still a year or so away, there are a few bright points for optimism. Senior economist for the Research and Analysis Bureau at the Montana Department of Labor, Barb Wagner, states that though growth may be painfully slow, Montana will continue to move forward. Petroleum manufacturing and energy related industries are creating tangible signs that recovery is underway in the eastern part of the state, and an upward trend in general service industries will mostly likely only get stronger statewide in 2012. *To read more, visit the Missoulian at [Shining Stars in the East...](#)* by Betsey Cohan.

Billings Businesses Keep Busy With Bakken Boom

While many other parts of the state are feeling the effects of the recession, many businesses in Billings are booming this year, providing services, trucks, workers and pipes for more than 350 companies pumping crude out of Eastern Montana and Western North Dakota. In fact, ties to the Bakken boom are so strong in Yellowstone County, that air carrier Silver Airways is considering adding a direct flight from Billings to Williston, ND. Not surprising when an estimated \$1.5 billion is being spent *each month* drilling in the Bakken. North Dakota is passing Alaska in oil production, and some hope that it will eventually bump Texas off the top of the oil baron hill. The Bakken is also producing \$1.2 billion in revenue for Montana, and more rigs are coming. Richland County is seeing major developments, as Oklahoma's Continental Resources is proposing to drill up to 400 wells in the area. *To read more, visit the Billings Gazette at [Billings Companies Busy Supporting Bakken Oil Boom](#)*, by Jan Falstad.

Questions? Comments? Want to join our mailing list? Contact the SWIB Staff at 406-444-4480, email at kwicks2@mt.gov, or visit our website at <http://swib.mt.gov/>

